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THE IMMORTAL FIGURE OF LENIN

- USSR -

by K. Voroshilov

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### THE IMMORTAL FIGURE OF LENIN

/Following is a translation of an article by K. Voroshilov in the Russian-language periodical Politicheskoye samoobrazovaniye (Political Self-Education), Moscow, Vol. IV, No. 4, April 1960, pages 11-26./

This year the Soviet people observe the 90th anniversary of the great Lenin. The name of Vladimir Il'ich Lenin is the purest and dearest of names to all the people of our country. Lenin indicated to the people of old Tsarist Russia the right way to deliverance from social and national oppression and lack of rights. Under his guidance the people of our country were the first in the world to achieve a socialist revolution and create a powerful Soviet state. They have built socialism by following Lenin's way and are now successfully approaching communism.

Lenin was a brilliant follower of the teachings of Marx and Engels, who for the first time unveiled the laws of the development of human society and its revolutionary transformation on socialist principles. In his works Lenin generalized the experiences of the history of the revolutionary movement after the death of Marx and Engels; he developed Marxism in detail, giving consideration to all characteristics of social development during that period. Lenin was the great leader of the workers and a great scientist. His contribution to the Marxist theory was so great that it became rightly known as the Marxist-Leninist theory.

A little over 40 years ago the Marxist-Leninist doctrine on the building of a socialist society existed only in theories in books. Now socialism has won in our country completely and finally. More than one-third of the world's mankind adhere to the ways of socialism and communism. It is a great triumph for Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin created the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and raised it in a true Marxian spirit. In the process of class struggles our party grew and strengthened, becoming the indestructible Marxist-Leninist party of the proletariat. All that our Motherland is now justly proud of and all our achievements that are recognized not only by our friends but also by our opponents have been obtained by the Soviet people under the guidance of Lenin's Communist Party, which follows faithfully the doctrine of Marx and Lenin.

It was not an easy job for Lenin and his comrades-in-arms to create our mighty Communist Party. It grew and gathered strength in

the process of the class struggle inside the country and of the combat waged against foreign interventionists, Mensheviks, socialist revolutionaries, and inter-party oppositions. Trotskyism, Zinov'yevshchina, Pyatakovs, Bukharinites, and other movements represent pits and bumps and stumps and roots standing on the way to our glorious Communist Party of Lenin.

Our party has overcome all the obstacles, eradicated the rotted roots of every opposition, and emerged from these trials strong and united as a monolith. It succeeded because it was founded and developed by Lenin and armed with Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin deeply believed in the constructive force of a liberated people. When the Soviet power gained victory and Lenin headed the first Soviet government, our mother country was subjected for several years to invasions of the imperialist interventionists and an internal bitter and merciless counterrevolution, which brought terrible destruction to the country and killed millions of our people. Towns and villages, factories and plants, mines and railroads, were laid in ruins. Lenin and the Communist Party, created and cemented by his genius, as well as the heroic Soviet people, did not shirk in the face of unprecedented difficulties and privations, but worked bravely to overcome them. Lenin advanced our mother country with assurance along the unknown path of building a new socialist life.

Lenin elaborated the principles of the internal and external policies of the Soviet state, the vitality of which has been fully confirmed by the subsequent development of the Soviet Union. He thoroughly explored the ways for building socialism in our country and substantiated the necessity of industrializing the country and of cooperativizing agriculture.

This, Lenin's legacy, has been fulfilled. The Soviet people have created a highly developed industry, which occupies second place in the world in the volume of its gross output. The peasantry has long ago implemented Lenin's cooperative plan. The USSR has a large mechanized socialist agriculture.

Lenin indicated the way to strengthen the unity, development, and consolidation of the friendship between the peoples of the USSR. Now the unity and solidarity of the Soviet people around the Communist Party and government, their sincere fraternal friendship, is a magnificent example to the whole world.

Lenin was a persistent fighter; he taught us to struggle persistently for the education of a new man and for developing in people their best qualities. Lenin was the greatest humanist on earth. All his works, his life, and his tireless sociopolitical activity represent a wonderful example of selfless service to the people, unselfishness, industriousness, modesty, and love of mankind. His will of iron could not be broken by imprisonment, exile, the malicious tricks and intrigues of the enemies of the working class, or by the bullets of the counter-revolution.

Lenin taught us to conduct a policy of peace and the development of friendly relations with all the peoples of the world. At the beginning of the Soviet rule our state made an announcement of the policy of peace in the Decree on Peace of V. I. Lenin. From that time our state has consistently advocated peace in the whole world and has fought for the prevention of wars and the peaceful coexistence of states with different sociopolitical systems. We always remember Lenin's remarkable words: "Our policy of peace is approved by the majority of people in the world" (Soch. /Collected Works/, Vol. 30, page 365).

Following the steps of the great Lenin, the Soviet people are now successfully building communism, i.e., a society in which each man works according to his ability and receives necessities of life according to his needs. We aim at improving with each year the life of the Soviet people. It will not be long before we shall have in the Soviet Union the highest level as regards the well-being of the workers and the shortest working day. Our people will attain that without fail as they adhere to Lenin's doctrine.

Lenin's way represents a highway to the happiness of mankind; it liberates from every type of oppression, poverty, and ignorance; it excludes wars from the life of society and secures eternal peace and friendship between peoples. For this reason Lenin's name has become a symbol of the new world, near and dear to all the people of the globe.

We students of the great Lenin remember with special pride the days when we conducted the revolutionary struggle under the guidance of Lenin, under his banner, armed with his immortal teachings.

Lenin's life and activity were so diverse and full of important events that not only the present young generation but also we representatives of the older generation find it difficult to recreate completely the figure of Lenin. And yet we repeatedly met V. I. Lenin and worked directly under him.

Much has already been written about Lenin, but one could continue to write whole volumes about his life. I should like to speak in this article about Lenin's unswerving conviction regarding the triumph of Marxism and the noble ideals of communism, about his deep faith in people, his principles, his irreconcilability toward the enemies of the working class.

#### ADHERENCE TO MARXISM

V. I. Lenin knew well the works of Marx and Engels; he always consulted them and firmly believed in the rightness of the Marxist doctrine. Vladimir Il'ich stressed that Marx's teaching is omnipotent because it is right. He wrote with great love about Marx and Engels and defended Marxism from enemy attacks. In one of his letters to Iness Armand, Lenin said: "I was rereading Engels' 'Zur Wohnungsfrage'

('On the Problem of Housing' -- K. V.) with the introduction of 1887. Do you know it? It is wonderful! I am still in love with Marx and Engels and cannot stand any slanders against them. No, these are real people! We must learn from them. We must not leave this ground. Social chauvinists and Kautsky's followers have already left this ground" (Ibid., Vol. 35, page 225).

Bookish and abstract perception of Marxist theory was foreign to Lenin. He liked to admonish frequently that Marxism was not a dead dogma but a living guide for action. Lenin saw in Marxism a mighty weapon for the revolutionary transformation of society; the deliverance of the workers from economic, political, and spiritual oppression; and the building of socialism and communism.

As far back as 1894, Lenin wrote in one of his first works on Marxism: "The overwhelming magnetic force which draws to this theory the socialists of all countries can be traced to the fact that it combines a strict and superior scientific character (being the last word of social science) with a revolutionary character. It is not an accidental combination, but results not only from the fact that the founder of the doctrine personally combined in himself scientist and revolutionary, but also from the inherent and indissoluble combination in the theory itself" (Ibid., Vol. 1, page 308).

These words should be fully applicable to Lenin himself and to his immortal teachings.

Comprehending Marxism perfectly, V. I. Lenin with exceptional depth decided intricate theoretical problems, studying from every angle the socioeconomical and political structure of prerevolutionary Russia and the conditions of different classes, arming the party and the working class with a clear and logical theory of the revolutionary transformation of the country.

He knew well that the historic development of Russia and of other countries constantly posed new problems before Marxist science and demanded their correct interpretation. All his works represent vivid examples of a masterly application of Marxism in the revolutionary struggle and a further development of Marx's theory. It suffices to remind the reader that it was Lenin who was the first to analyze profoundly the highest and last phase of capitalism -- imperialism -- and to create a new theory for proletarian revolution corresponding to that era.

Adherence to Marxism, irreconcilability toward opportunists and revisionists, a creative approach to the revolutionary theory, its development and improvement, based on new manifestations of the life and experience of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, and the union of theory and practice -- these are to the everlasting credit of the Bolsheviks. Thus we remember Lenin, and in this way he educated our party, the party of creative Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin was the coryphee of science, but never a bureaucratic scientist detached from practical and revolutionary struggle. We know



what an inexhaustible wealth of ideas is contained in Lenin's book Gosudarstvo i revolyutsiya [The State and Revolution], although the revolutionary events of Russia in 1917 prevented Lenin from completing his book. He took over the helm of the revolution. Later on he noted that "it is more agreeable and useful to practice the 'experience of revolution' than to describe it" (Soch. [Collected Works], Vol. 25, page 462).

Lenin constantly carried to the masses the unfading light of socialist ideas, politically enlightening the working classes and the workers in general, teaching them how to struggle for social liberation. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party he created performed the great service of uniting scientific socialism with the workers' movement. Vladimir Il'ich was happy and proud that in the Russian workers there grew a passionate desire for knowledge and socialism, and that conscious social democrats were developing -- brave fighters for the cause of the working class -- in spite of stupefying hard labor, lack of rights, and police arbitrariness.

I am happy that I could join the way of a proletarian revolutionary already in my youth and unite my fate with the party of the great Lenin. The words of Lenin, his thoughts and ideas, illuminated our struggle against the exploiters and taught us how to live and fight.

My prerevolutionary work in the period before the October Revolution was carried out in an important industrial center of the country -- the Donets coal fields. As far back as the end of the last century I took part in an underground social democratic circle at the "Dyumo" Plant in Alchevsk. In 1903 I joined the party organization of the Gartman Steam-Engine Plant in Lugansk, where I formalized my admittance to the RSDRP [Rossiyskaya sotsial-demokraticheskaya rabochaya partiya -- Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party] and worked as a Bolshevik.

Together with the other Bolsheviks and proletarians of Lugansk I had to go through a severe school. In comparison with the struggle of the whole working class in Russia, the life and struggle of the Lugansk workers was of course just a drop in the sea of sorrow and wrath of the people. However, these drops collected into a sea in the storming waves of which the Tsarist regime and Russian capitalism finally drowned.

As is generally known, Lugansk became the fortress of Bolshevism as far back as 1905. The Lugansk party organization isolated completely the Mensheviks and unanimously led the workers' movement there.

Together with the working classes of other Russian towns, the Lugansk proletarians actively participated in the first Russian revolution. V. I. Lenin called this revolution a general rehearsal without which the victory of 1917 would have been impossible. Now when I recall once more the events of the 1905-1907 revolution, I am more and more convinced of the wisdom of Lenin's words defining so clearly and exactly the character and significance of those glorious years.

As a revolutionary leader of the working class Lenin saw in the first Russian revolution a school for teaching the broad masses of the people to fight, an opportunity for organizing and training them politically and for establishing revolutionary cadres. We know how forcibly Lenin unveiled the lies of the reactionary bourgeois press, which proclaimed that the revolutionary revolt of the masses would lead to destruction and chaos. Lenin wrote that the experience of revolution in Russia and the other countries clearly did away with the inventions of the enemies of the working class. V. I. Lenin noted that never before in a society divided into hostile classes had the working class had the opportunity to learn about politics on such a wide scale and to develop its many-sided initiative as during the years of the revolution.

In our own experience we were becoming convinced that Lenin's words were true. In the mortal struggle against the old and rotten Tsarist regime, which was hanging like a stone around the people's neck, the workers of our country took a big step forward in the years 1905-1907 in creating the revolution and in organizing their forces. In the fire of revolution were born the soviets -- the source of the rule of the workers; fighting squads of workers were created; the first trade-unions appeared, as well as various voluntary societies of workers and employees. For the first time in Russia a legal newspaper of the working class was published. Finally, during the period of open revolutionary clashes a party apparatus was formed that was capable of directing all the revolutionary organizations toward one purpose. All these forms of organization of the revolutionary masses developed still more in 1917.

During the stormy years of the first Russian revolution I was fortunate to see Lenin on several occasions, hear his speeches, and participate in the work of the party congresses. I met Lenin for the first time in April 1906 in St. Petersburg in the quarters of the Bolshevik newspaper Vpered /Forward/. At that time Lenin had a conversation with us -- a group of Bolsheviks, delegates to the Fourth Congress of the RSDRP. This meeting and his conversation will remain with me forever.

As I have already mentioned, this was my first visit to the capital from Lugansk. Not without difficulty I found the publishing office of the newspaper, contacted the person I needed to see, and was told that I had come too early. Although some of the delegates had already arrived, many were still absent. In the office I was met by Nadezhda Konstantinovna, who questioned me with special gentleness and kindness about the organization, the workers, and their sentiments. She wrote everything down in a tiny notebook and warned me to be very careful: "There are thousands and thousands of sleuths in St. Petersburg." I learned that in a few days Lenin would meet with the delegates to the congress, who were already there.



I was led through passages and corridors to a small apartment on the second or third floor (I cannot remember exactly), where I entered a tiny room. Ten or 12 people were assembled in the room. The meeting had started and we were late. One of the delegates took the floor. The question concerned the sentiments of the working classes as regards the elections to the First Duma. The speaker stared fixedly at one of the comrades who was sitting next to someone else and who, from time to time, focused his eyes in a special way, glancing at the speaker or at some other person in the room.

This must be Lenin, I thought. For some reason I felt that I had already recognized him and knew him. I began to study his face, figure, and movements. I wanted to imprint in my mind quickly and well all that pertained to the person who was so much in my thoughts and whom I wished to meet so much. At the same time, I knew I would have to describe our Lenin to his proletarian brothers upon my return to Lugansk. I knew that they would want me to tell everything in detail and that I would have to repeat the description several times at the meetings and at the plant during the break.

Finally my turn came to speak. Lenin looked at me. I remember his kind smile. Encouraged and calmed, I briefly reported on the organizations, the moods of the workers, the elections to the Duma, and other matters.

The reports came to an end. Lenin briefly stated the general situation and turned to discussions with the delegates. The meeting bore an unofficial preliminary character. It was necessary for Lenin's orientation and for other tactical and strategical purposes.

Lenin joked much in the conversations, and between jokes posed a number of unexpected questions to one or another person. He literally was interested in everything. He listened with equal interest about the elections to the Duma, the intrigues of the Mensheviks, about the cadets, our fighting squads, their training and equipment, the Cossacks of the stanitsas in the vicinity of Lugansk, the peasants who took away land from the landowners, and so on.

I remember as if it were yesterday with what inspiration Lenin joined in the one or the other conversation, which answered his thoughts and confirmed his assumptions. Twice Lenin's approving remarks were directed toward me. This gave me a sincere pleasure and made me feel bigger in my own eyes, more important and more assured.

Just before leaving, Lenin spoke about the congress and our (Bolshevist) prospects. We all listened to him, feeling such an enormous, mighty, and titanic strength in him that none of the "majorities" or machinations of the Mensheviks, about which we had heard so much from the delegates, frightened us any longer. Now we were seeing with our own eyes and hearing with our own ears the man who was the true builder of the proletarian revolutionary party, its tireless guardian and leader. We felt that our Lenin knew the precise ways and means for defending the revolution and the revolutionary Social Democratic Party, which had the share in directing the great liberation movement in Russia.

Shortly after, the delegates left for Stockholm, where the Fourth Congress of the party met for more than 2 weeks. In history it is known as the Unifying Congress. It was attended by Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and representatives of the national social democratic parties (Poles, Letts, Ukrainians, and Bundists). As is generally known, this union proved to be merely formal. The Bolsheviks never ceased in their ideological and political struggle with the Mensheviks, who remained violent and irreconcilable advocates of bringing the proletariat under the influence of the bourgeois policy, i.e., double-dyed opportunists.

The situation in the country was difficult at that time. The rising in Moscow in December was suppressed. The individual uprisings of the workers in other towns of Russia were also without success. The counterrevolution raised its head. New persecutions of Bolsheviks and revolutionary workers began. The Mensheviks, who had never believed in revolution and in the creative force of the working class and the peasantry, seeded panic and depression. They said: "We should not have taken up arms." The Mensheviks adhered to the line of folding up the revolution, asking for the support of the Cadet Duma, and, in essence, calling upon the workers to bow to their class enemies and capitulate to the liberal bourgeoisie.

You should have seen Lenin at the Stockholm Congress! He defended the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks and exposed the Mensheviks with his inherent passion and energy. And although the Mensheviks (or "Medis," as we called them then) were for several reasons in the majority at the Congress and succeeded in implementing their opportunist resolutions on some questions, their leaders were far from being victorious.

It is interesting to note that Lenin was irreconcilable in his speeches: he firmly and sharply criticized the Menshevik speakers, Menshevism itself, and opportunism as a whole. In spite of this, Lenin's speeches were received with great attention by all (including the Mensheviks). It was as if Lenin actually cast a spell on his listeners in speaking on one or another principal question. His arguments and logic were irresistible and literally captivated his listeners.

When Lenin ended his speeches, the Mensheviks sprang to life and made a commotion, jumping from their seats and nervously interrupting one another. They were powerless to oppose Lenin's revolutionary principles and his clear and precise line of thought.

In criticizing his opponents Lenin never insulted the person but always attempted to explain the error and harm of the ideological position taken and where the Mensheviks had gone wrong.

Lenin's loyalty to principle and irreconcilability toward all deviations from revolutionary Marxism, his deep faith in the victory of the cause of the working class, and his rocklike Bolshevik line served as an example and a great school to us young workers of the party.

At the Fourth Congress of the Party, I had the occasion to meet many Bolsheviks for the first time -- Vorovskiy, Dzerzhinskiy, Kalinin, Lunacharskiy, Skvortsov-Stepanov, Stalin, Frunze, Shaumyan, Yaroslavskiy, and others. The Bolshevik delegates frequently met together between the meetings and held animated conversations in some restaurant at dinner or supper. Lenin was always the center of our noisy company. He listened to the opinions of his comrades, patiently explained difficult problems, and gave wise advice.

One year later I met Lenin again at the Fifth Congress of the RSDRP in the spring of 1907. The revolution in Russia was in transition; the workers retreated in battle with a view to preserving the organized forces and revolutionary traditions and with a strong belief in the coming victory. As Lenin had observed, the rising of the strike movement in the spring of 1906 and 1907 signified a "suspension of the retreat and an attempt of the retreaters to counterattack" (Soch. [Collected Works], Vol. 16, page 378). But on the whole, the revolution was clearly losing.

We delegates had to move about a great deal before the congress opened. At first it was proposed to convene in Copenhagen, but to please the Russian autocracy the Danish government refused to give permission to the congress to meet on its territory. It was necessary to find quickly an "asylum" for our meeting. Once more we had to pass through many trials of moving about. We were not at all inclined toward tourism; we had no money or means for this luxury. The situation called for a hasty meeting of the congress to sum up the results of the revolution and to determine tactics for the party under the new historic conditions. Important and responsible work with the masses awaited us in Russia.

Finally, on 30 April (old style) 1907 the Congress convened in the outskirts of London in a Reformation church.

In evaluating the results of the revolutionary struggle of 1905-1907 of the Russian proletariat, V. I. Lenin wrote that "the development of the revolution brought a complete victory for Bolshevism" (Ibid., Vol. 12, page 151). This was clearly reflected in the work of the Fifth Congress of the RSDRP (London). The Bolsheviks and the Polish and Lettish social democrats (who supported the Bolsheviks on several occasions) were in the majority. Lenin was the soul and the brain of the congress. He read the principal reports and prepared the plans for the resolutions.

The most important question, which was sharply debated at the Congress, concerned the position to be taken as regards non-proletarian parties. The Mensheviks fought openly for bringing the policy of the social democrats into line with that of the liberal bourgeoisie. In summing up the results of the congress, Lenin said: "An agreement between the policy of social democrats and the liberal bourgeoisie is the last word of Menshevism" (Ibid., Vol. 12, page 442).

The congress adopted the Bolshevik resolution evaluating the non-proletarian parties from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism and clearly laying down the tactics to follow in regard to them.

This important question was violently debated: the Mensheviks, Bundists, and Trotskyites made more than 70 attempts against the resolution, trying to castrate its revolutionary content. But their attempts met with failure. The proposal of the Mensheviks to assemble a so-called "Workers' Congress" with the participation of the social democrats, socialist revolutionaries, and anarchists also failed. Thus, there was a collapse of the Mensheviks' policy of the liquidation of the RSDRP and of its replacement with an ill-assorted organization without any plan. The congress condemned the slogan of the Mensheviks for assembling a "Workers' Congress."

Lenin and the Bolsheviks under his leadership had won a victory over the opportunists and on the question of trade unions. The congress adopted a decision on the ideological guidance of trade unions by the party and on their organizational connection with the party, rejecting the proposal of the Mensheviks regarding the neutrality of trade unions.

We summed up the results of the congress with great joy, noting that there was a complete victory for the Lenin and Bolshevik line at the Fifth Congress of the RSDRP.

Shortly after, on 3 June 1907, the Tsarist government dismissed the Second Duma and arrested the social democratic faction of 65 deputies. A reactionary movement set in in the country.

Having suppressed the first Russian revolution, the Tsarist rulers carried out savage reprisals against the revolutionary workers and peasants. Courts-martial raged for several years. Thousands of Bolsheviks were shot and hanged; thousands of our comrades were exiled to Siberia and to the north of the country. The Lugansk party organization also suffered heavy losses. Thanks to the "mercy" of our autocratic government, from July 1907, I spent 6 years in prison and exile.

But no persecutions could break the iron will of the Bolsheviks, led by the great Lenin. In the darkest period of reaction Lenin wrote with unusual depth that the Russian proletariat by its heroic struggle over a period of 3 years (1905-1907) "had won for itself and the Russian people that which other people took decades to achieve. It liberated the working class from the influence of treacherous and scornfully weak liberalism. It gained hegemony in the fight for freedom and democracy as a requisite for the struggle for socialism. It gained the ability to conduct the revolutionary mass struggle for all the oppressed and exploited masses of Russia; without this no serious progress can be achieved by mankind in any part of the world.

"These conquests will not be taken away from the Russian proletariat by any reactionary movement, hatred, slander, or malice on the part of the liberals or by any hesitation, shortsightedness, or lack of faith on the part of the socialist opportunists" (Ibid., Vol. 16, page 356).

Further events proved that Lenin was absolutely right.

## GREAT STRATEGIST OF THE PROLETARIAN MOVEMENT

V. I. Lenin had an exceptional gift of scientific foresight, a remarkable ability of looking far into the future and of distinguishing its contours. Lenin's ingenious insight manifested itself particularly clearly at the crucial points of history, during the days of the revolutionary storm. He virtually sensed the possible changes in the structure of the class forces and in the behavior of the different parties and their leaders, and divined with remarkable insight the further course of events. This made it possible to orientate without error in different situations, and to plan correct ideological, political, organizational, and practical lines for the future.

I met Lenin many times during the unforgettable year of 1917, heard his reports and speeches, and felt directly his wise leadership.

During the period preceding the February revolution I worked underground in Petrograd. My legal "roof" was provided by the Surgaylo workshops, which were filling many military orders for the front. In spite of the fact that the police searched my quarters on two occasions (without finding anything), I remained at liberty.

At that time the Petrograd organization of Bolsheviks was small. Many leaders were not yet back from prison or exile, others were abroad. But in spite of the small cadres of the party, the great difficulties entailed in underground activity, and the wartime conditions, the Bolsheviks continued to work tirelessly among the masses, preparing them for a new revolution. The fact that a revolution was approaching became more and more evident and clear.

Tsarist Russia entered the First World War poorly prepared; at that time it had already been going on for more than 2 years. Russian troops suffered heavy losses. Industry and agriculture were neglected. Economic chaos increased. Merchandise rapidly increased in price and shortages in food products were felt more and more sharply. The life of the workers became increasingly more difficult.

It is only natural that under these conditions the chauvinist intoxication, which at the beginning of the war had gripped broad masses of the people, would start to wear off. With each day the revolutionary movement grew stronger and more acute. It spread not only behind the lines but to the troops at the front. The country was clearly heading for new revolutionary battles to deliver the working class and the Russian people.

Lenin believed in the victory of the coming revolution and prepared for it. He could clearly see that the First World War was an all-powerful "repeater" of history, accelerating the ripening of the revolution in Russia and in various European cities.

In the historic days of February 1917, the proletariat and the revolutionary forces of the army openly demonstrated against the Tsarist autocracy in Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities. The autocracy was overthrown. The second bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia triumphed literally in a few days.



Lenin was languishing in forced exile, separated from Russia by the fronts of the imperialist war. In spite of the inconsistent and contradictory telegrams from Russia that appeared in the Western European bourgeois press, Lenin thoroughly analyzed the character moving the forces and the prospects for the development of the revolution in Russia.

At the height of the revolutionary events in Russia, Lenin telegraphed on 6 March 1917 to the Bolsheviks returning to Russia: "Our tactics must be complete distrust -- no support to the new government -- Kerenskiy to be particularly suspected -- arming the proletariat is the sole guarantee -- immediate elections to the Petrograd Duma -- no rapprochement with the other parties" (*Ibid.*, Vol. 23, page 287). In "Letters from Abroad" Lenin indicated that the revolution itself was not over, but only its first phase; the workers must perform miracles of heroism to overthrow the rule of the bourgeois landowners and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Although certain party leaders, such as Kamenev and others, were in Russia at that time, they did not understand the essence of the events and the order of the class forces in the country, and reverted to a defensive position. On the other hand, Lenin, living in Switzerland, saw further than the others and understood the events better. His first words to the workers of Russia and the Bolshevik Party were an appeal to pass from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the socialist.

The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was formed in Petrograd immediately after the victory of the February Revolution. I, together with other comrades (Bolsheviks from the capital), was elected a member of the Petrograd soviet. We organized our Bolshevik faction to uphold the policy and principles of our party in the soviet.

As is generally known, the majority of seats in the soviet at that time were occupied by Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries. Because of this there was a strong conflict from the very beginning between the Bolsheviks on the one side and the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries on the other. The conflict centered around several radical problems of the revolution, primarily the problem of war and peace, the attitude toward the Provisional Government, the role of the soviet in the revolution, and so on.

However, my stay in Petrograd was not long; in late March the party sent me back to Lugansk.

The February Revolution breathed new life into the work of the Lugansk Bolshevik organization. It started to grow rapidly, gather strength, and absorb the more conscious and politically mature segment of workers and leading representatives of the intelligentsia. Only several dozen people could be counted in the Lugansk organization of Bolsheviks on the eve of the February Revolution. The organization, as all other organizations of our party, suffered strong repressions from the Stolypin reaction. By April its membership grew to 1,500.

Soon after, the Trade Union of Metal Workers came into being again; it had been formed as far back as 1905 and had always been led by the Bolsheviks.

The Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries, taking advantage of the weakened situation of the Bolshevik organization during the war, managed to gain control of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and to influence strongly the mood of the working masses in the enterprises, which made matters very unpleasant. To liquidate the dominance of the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries in the soviet and their influence in the enterprises, had become one of our most important tasks.

In Lugansk I saw many of my old friends who had taken part in the 1905-1907 revolution. On 17 March, the day of my arrival at Lugansk, there was an organizational meeting of the old party men, participants of the underground movement. On the evening of the same day, the first meeting of the party for all the Lugansk Bolsheviks took place; more than 600 people were present. M. Afonin reported on the work of the organization. I spoke about the tasks faced by our Lenin party in the new revolutionary period.

I said that our Bolshevik Party and the workers were impatiently waiting for the return of our leader Lenin. I also mentioned that an All-Russia conference of the party would shortly take place at which the program for revolutionary action would be determined. Following V. I. Lenin's instructions stated in his "Letters from Abroad," I said that the Russian proletariat would not stop halfway but would continue further to the victory of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The war, which continued after the overthrow of the autocracy under the landowner and bourgeois regime, was foreign to and ruinous for our people. The way out of the war could be reached only through the victory of the socialist revolution.

The meeting took place in an atmosphere of full agreement.

Lugansk seethed with life and vitality in those days. Revolutionary public debates took place in the streets of the town. These frequently lasted well into the night. The proletarians were increasingly imbued with a true revolutionary spirit, which attracted the masses.

We made preparations to celebrate the First of May (it was for the first time being observed by the new calendar, as in Western Europe). The party organizations in the enterprises were busily studying the famous April theses of V. I. Lenin, which called for a course of studies in socialist revolution. We explained the theses to the workers and exposed the treachery of the Mensheviks, socialist revolutionaries, and others.

The First of May came. Thousands of workers were out in the streets demonstrating their strength and solidarity around the Bolshevik Party of Lenin. Our party led demonstrations; the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries kept quiet and did not dare show themselves to the masses.

The flag-bearers carried red flags in front of the ranks of workers; they were followed by armed fighting squads, participants in the events of 1905, and the nucleus of the Red Army of Lugansk. The workers of the textile mill came next, then the workers of the tube-rolling mill and those of other enterprises. Slogans were heard from the closed ranks of workers: "Down with the War!" "No Confidence in the Provisional Government!" "Long Live the Soviet Power!" "Long Live the Bolshevik Party!" "Long Live Lenin, the Leader of the World Proletariat!"

Immediately after the celebrations of the First of May, Lutovin and I (I was then in charge of the Lugansk Town Committee for the party) were sent to the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the Bolshevik Party.

I remember well that the delegates to the conference were in an excited and joyful mood because our great Lenin had returned to our Motherland. We, the Lugansk Bolsheviks, had extensively studied his works and had always followed unquestioningly and fervently all his directions.

The new encounter with Lenin at the April conference was particularly remarkable. Together with the other delegates I listened to Lenin describe with maximum clarity and conviction the plan for transforming the bourgeois democratic revolution into the socialist. In my notes on the April conference I recorded the following words of Lenin: "Proletarian centers where intermediate elements are in the minority represent a good thing. Centers where intermediate centers prevail (bureaucrats and others) slow down the revolution. Our revolution has advanced in places by gigantic steps." I was happy to feel that Lugansk was among the number of proletarian centers where the revolution had advanced by seven-mile steps.

Lenin completed his report on the current situation by a reference to the speech of a miner from the Donets coal fields. Lenin had attended a meeting of the Bolsheviks the day after his arrival at Petrograd. Delegates to the All-Russia Conference of the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers' Deputies had assembled at the meeting. One of the delegates, an elderly miner, described in detail how the workers had fought against the sabotage of the mine owner, preventing the mine from being flooded, established labor inspection, and strived for obtaining an 8-hour working day. Vladimir Il'ich liked his speech very much. He told us at the conference:

"I will conclude by referring to a speech which has made a great impression on me. One coal miner, without using any bookish words, made a remarkable speech in which he described how they conducted the revolution. When they took over the mines they had to guard the cables in order to assure the continuation of production. Their next problem was to obtain bread, which was lacking; the miners came to an agreement on ways to obtain it. This is a true program for revolution, not read out of a book. It is a true conquest of power on the spot (Ibid., Vol. 24, page 212).

Listening to Lenin, we admired his ability to describe so clearly and simply the most complicated theoretical questions, translate them into practical language, and indicate exactly what must be done in one or another stage of revolution and now.

Lenin put before the party the task of a peaceful transition to the socialist revolution by carrying out painstaking explanatory work among the workers; by exposing and isolating the Mensheviks, socialist revolutionaries, and other similar elements; by obtaining a majority in the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and by transferring to the soviet the entire rule of the country.

The April conference had great significance. During its session the strategy and tactics for a transition from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the socialist were elaborated. It was a turning point in the rallying of the forces of the Bolsheviks. Many Bolsheviks, after long years of underground activity, exile, emigration, and dissociation, had returned at the height of the revolutionary struggle to Petrograd and other centers of Russia. Some of them were undecided and confused and inclined to come to an agreement with the small bourgeoisie parties of socialist revolutionaries and Mensheviks; they even went so far as to trust the Provisional Government, although mentioning that they proposed to establish "control" over the imperialist government.

All these hesitations and wrong views on the development of the revolution were examined at the conference and subjected to Lenin's criticism based on his principles. In the decisions of the conference the chief emphasis was put on explaining to the masses the evil of a defensive position, i.e., supporting the war, on the necessity of isolating the petty-bourgeoisie parties, and on exposing the bourgeois and landowner nature of the Provisional Government and its reactionary policy. The policy of no support to the Provisional Government, supreme power to the soviet, and steering the course toward socialist revolution, which had already been laid down in the April theses of Lenin's appeals, was approved by the conference as the aim of the party.

The results of the Conference demonstrated that there was a rallying of the party around Lenin's program of fighting for the victory of the socialist revolution. With clear directions from Lenin, the party renewed its work with double energy among the masses of workers, soldiers, and peasants, as well as in the soviets, the committees of the enterprises, and other workers' organizations.

On returning from the conference to Lugansk, we assembled a party meeting of the people of the town; then other meetings took place in the plants to inform the people of the results of the All-Russia Conference of the party.

In this connection I should like to note on characteristic feature of the Lugansk proletariat participation in the revolution. The Bolsheviks and non-party workers were highly organized and a great development of democracy was in evidence. All questions of the revolutionary struggle, life in the city, work in the factories and plants,

and so on, were discussed at meetings of the party and of the factories, conferences of the committees at the plants, and in the soviet. In this way all strategy and tactics were planned and carried out with the participation of the workers and other employees of the town.

The Bolshevik newspaper Donetskiy proletariy [Donets Proletarian], which started to appear on the first of June, extensively illuminated the activity of the party organizations and came out as a collective agitator and organizer of the masses.

The Lugansk Bolsheviks conducted the major tasks of informing the masses, fighting for a majority, and exposing the agreements between the Mensheviks and the socialist revolutionaries and their support of the reactionary policy of the Provisional Government. At the same time, they kept close watch on the development of the revolutionary events in Petrograd and acted accordingly.

Another difficult period arose in the development of the revolution. The troops of the Provisional Government shot at the workers in their July demonstrations in Petrograd. The counterrevolution was on the offensive again and made attempts to suppress the revolutionary forces and check the rapid growth of the Bolshevik authority among the masses.

V. I. Lenin illuminated with an exceptional depth our situation during that period in his remarkable works of July: "Political Situation," "Behind the Slogans," and "Lessons of the Revolution."

At the crucial period of the revolution of July 1917, the Bolshevik Party called together the Sixth Congress. Lutovinov, Kamenskiy, and I were chosen to represent the Lugansk party organization at the congress. When we came to Petrograd we could see that the situation in the capital was very difficult. Some of our leaders had been arrested. V. I. Lenin was in hiding. We learned with regret that he could not personally participate in the congress. In fact, our party had passed to a semi-legal position.

The situation in Petrograd was uneasy. Everywhere sleuths hounded the active members of our party. Because of this we had to change our places of work several times during the session of the congress. But our chief worry was the future development of the revolutionary struggle. The Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries openly participated in the Provisional Government; they passed from talks on democracy and freedom to participation in reprisals against the revolutionary workers, soldiers, and peasants and persecution of the Bolsheviks.

The period of dual power came to an end, and with it prospects for a peaceful victory of the socialist revolution by obtaining a majority in the soviets. The soviets ruled by the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries became a simple appendage of the counterrevolutionary Provisional Government.

Discussing the political situation of the country, the congress came to the conclusion that under these conditions the slogan of



"supreme power to the soviets" should be temporarily suspended and that the work load of the party should be centralized directly in the plans and their committees.

The congress noted that the ranks of the Bolshevik Party had greatly increased and that its authority among the masses was widely spreading. The party had almost tripled the number of its members since the April conference: from 80,000 members it went up to 240,000. The Bolsheviks had a decisive influence in the key enterprises of Petrograd, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and the Donets Basin; their position in the army and navy became stronger.

The delegates of different areas spoke on increasing the revolutionary consciousness of the masses; they indicated that discontent was growing among the workers, soldiers, and peasants in connection with the treacherous policy of the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries. In the course of the struggle for freedom the masses saw for themselves that the Bolsheviks were the only ones who spoke faithfully and consecutively for their interests, that they were the true revolutionaries.

Although in hiding from the sleuths of the Provisional Government, Lenin directed the congress and was its inspiring leader. Lenin wrote many articles during that period, analyzing in detail the situation in our country and elaborating a new line for the party in the revolution -- preparing for an armed conflict. I. V. Stalin described at the congress the substance of Lenin's directions. "The peaceful stage of the revolution is over, the order of the day is the bayonet."

The problems put forward during the course of the revolution were discussed and successfully solved at the congress. The party concentrated on strengthening the union of the working class and the peasantry and on increasing the revolutionary struggle of the army. It was decided to develop further the trade-union movement under the party's leadership and to obtain the active participation of the trade unions in the revolution. The decision to create a revolutionary union of youth was adopted.

On returning to Lugansk, we reported on the decisions of the congress at the party meetings and appealed to the workers to be vigilant and increase their activity in training our detachments for the Red Army.

In the first half of August, there were re-elections of workers' deputies to the Lugansk soviet. They indicated that our political work with the masses had yielded valuable results: the Bolsheviks had a 95 percent majority. I was elected chairman of the Lugansk soviet.

On 17 August 1917 we published in the newspaper Rabochiy put' [Labor's Way] a letter prepared by the Lugansk party committee of the Central Committee of the RSDRP (Bolsheviks) in which we reported that all the organizations of the town were in our hands: the mayor, members of the municipal administration, the chairman of the town Duma, the soviet of deputies, trade unions, the newspapers.

The heroic struggle of the Bolsheviks led by Lenin for the victory of the socialist revolution was crowned with brilliant success. The workers and peasants accomplished the Great October Socialist Revolution under the leadership of the Bolsheviks; they annihilated forever the power of landowners and capitalists in our country and paved the way to socialism for all mankind.

I remember that when the telegram announcing the victory of the armed revolt in Petrograd was received, I, as chairman of the Lugansk municipal soviet, called together a plenary meeting and gave the joyful news. The communication was received solemnly, with rapt attention. Since our town was entirely in the hands of the Bolsheviks, the executive committee was snowed under with business tasks: it had to decide on measures to be taken for strengthening defense and alertness, organizing the bank, court of justice, telegraph bureau, etc.

On top of this the Lugansk party organization was actively preparing for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. About 80 percent of all the votes in our elective district went to the Bolsheviks. Lutovinov and I were elected deputies, and in November we left for Petrograd.

In Petrograd, the town of the victorious socialist revolution, the working class applied its energy with extraordinary force. The Soviet Government led by Lenin was taking the measures necessary for creating the apparatus of the new government.

In November 1917 I was named Commissar of the city of Petrograd. In those days we had to "learn how to administer a country, learn that which until now was the monopoly of the bourgeois class" (*Ibid.*, Vol. 26, page 307). We had to work under conditions of destruction, famine, lack of fuel, and the sabotage of old bureaucrats. Our task was to strengthen the revolutionary order in the capital and create an apparatus for administering the intricate economy of the city. We fought against sabotage, mobilizing the bourgeois and bureaucrats for cleaning up the city and supplying it with fuel.

The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Sabotage and Counterrevolution was created shortly after. F. E. Dzerzhinskiy, old experienced Leninist Bolshevik and a man of strong will and noble heart, directed the commission. At his proposal I joined the commission. Guided by V. I. Lenin's directions, the commission was merciless to the enemies of the revolution. At the same time, however, each case was studied carefully and objectively in the attempt to avoid mistakes, taking into consideration that errors would lead to unnecessary sacrifice and bloodshed. The commission continuously leaned on the party organizations and maintained close contact with workers' groups and detachments of the Red Army.

In the first few months of the Soviet rule, I saw Lenin often and could observe his broad and diverse party and government activity. Before October we knew Lenin as the founder and leader of the Bolshevik Party, genial theoretician of Marxism, and great strategist

of the proletarian revolution. After the establishment of the Soviet power, Lenin's government activity developed extremely widely. He combined political wisdom and enormous capacity for work with a deep knowledge of the people's life and close ties with the workers, peasants, intelligentsia, and Red Army soldiers.

My work in Petrograd was interrupted soon after the October victory. The events at the front had created a stormy atmosphere. In February 1918, Germany interrupted negotiations for peace with the Soviet Government, breached the armistice agreement reached earlier, and renewed her attack. She hoped to overthrow the Soviet power and transform our country into her colony. The German troops were advancing particularly fast in the Ukraine.

I left for the Donets Basin at that time to start my military activity. I took part in the Civil War and in the defense against the invasion of the interventionists and the White Army. But this important subject needs to be illuminated in a special article, which I hope to write later.

Here I shall note only that the most crucial period in the life of the young republic of the soviets had come. The workers had put all their effort into the struggle for more than 3 years; they performed miracles of heroism and self-denial, withstood extreme hardship and privation, famine, and destruction, finally gaining full victory over the enemy armies. V. I. Lenin and the Communist Party led the defense of our Motherland during these stormy years with the same wisdom and insight as they led the whole revolutionary struggle of workers and peasants of our country.

Ending the Civil War triumphantly, the Soviet people returned to peaceful labor, restoring the national economy and implementing Lenin's plan for the building of socialism in the USSR.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the heroic Soviet people carried out Lenin's directives, transforming our country into one of the greatest powers of the world.

The socialist regime has lifted up millions and millions of people to active creative activity. As a result, from the lowest ranks of the population our country has produced and continues to produce statesmen, economists, talented organizers of industry, scientists, writers, and other cultural forces, masters of their trade. All the Soviet people constantly strive that our Motherland may become richer and mightier and our people more prosperous and cultured and happy. The Soviet Union is a country of high, truly human culture and of leading science.

Guided by the Leninist Central Committee of the Party (headed by N. S. Khrushchev), our people are successfully implementing the great tasks of building communism. The policy of the Communist Party has the unlimited trust of all the Soviet people. Our party, strong in its monolithic unity, is leading the Soviet people to communism under Lenin's banner.

Occupied with peaceful creative work, the Soviet people desire to live in peace and friendship with all the peoples of the world. The Soviet Government, conscious of the Soviet people's desire, is fighting relentlessly and persistently for peace in the world. It has achieved in this direction important and gratifying results.

We live in remarkable times when, in countries with billions of people, the socialist regime is unleashing in full force the mighty creative energy of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, the best qualities of all peoples -- fraternal comradeship, mutual aid, socialist internationalism.

The inexhaustible and unconquerable force of the great Lenin's doctrine, the cause of communism, manifests itself clearly in all this.

5253

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